

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-05 VO-03 CA-01 CIAE-00

INSE-00 SY-05 DEAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /086 W

-----121312 070143Z /70

R 060837Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9083

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KUALA LUMPUR 6227

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, SHUM, MY

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE BOAT CASE REFUGEES: MEETING WITH MALAYSIAN  
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL

1. SUMMARY: VISITING USG OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH NEW  
INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PAROLE PROGRAM MET SEPT. 5 WITH SECRETARY  
OF MALAYSIAN NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MALIK, WHO IS THE GOM  
OFFICER PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR REFUGEE MATTERS. LATTER  
DESCRIBED PROBLEMS GOM FACING WITH GROWING REFUGEE BACKLOG.  
HE ALSO INDICATED THAT MANY OF THE NEW ARRIVALS ARE FARMERS,  
ETC., WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT ASSOCIATION WITH U.S., WHO APPEAR  
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MOTIVATED BY MONETARY FACTORS. VISITING TEAM, REPRESENTING  
D/HA, INS AND BANGKOK REFUGEE OFFICE, BRIEFED MALIK AND  
HIS AIDES ON DETAILS OF NEW U.S. PROGRAM AND ITS RAMIFI-  
CATIONS FOR MALAYSIA, NOTING THAT BY THE END OF THIS YEAR  
IT IS EXPECTED TO MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL DENT IN THE CURRENT  
BACKLOG. PROBLEM OF ACCESSIBILITY TO REFUGEES AND  
IMPORTANCE OF AGGREGATING THEM INTO AS FEW CAMPS AS

POLITICALLY POSSIBLE WAS HIGHLIGHTED. ADDITIONALLY, FACT WAS STRESSED THAT U.S. SEES NO RATIONALE IN TRYING TO DISTINGUISH "POLITICAL" FROM "ECONOMIC" REFUGEES. MALIK SAID GOM WELCOMED NEW PROGRAM AND HOPED U.S. WOULD INSTITUTE FOLLOW-ON MEASURES WHEN THE PAROLE PROGRAM TERMINATED. CUSHING OF D/HA ASSURED HIM THAT THE U.S. WAS COMMITTED TO AN ON-GOING ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS, ALTHOUGH THE PRECISE NATURE OF OUR FOLLOW-ON PROGRAMS ARE NOT YET CLEAR. MEANWHILE, THE U.S. LOOKS FORWARD TO CONTINUED COOPERATIONS WITH THE GOM IN THIS HUMANITARIAN UNDERTAKING, BOTH IN ALLOWING REFUGEES ASYLUM AND PROVIDING FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE TO OUR PROCESSING EFFORTS. END SUMMARY.

2. VISITING USG TEAM CONCERNED WITH INDOCHINESE REFUGEES MET SEPT. 5 WITH ABDUL MALIK BIN ABDUL AZIZ, A SENIOR MALAYSIAN POLICE OFFICIAL CURRENTLY SERVING AS SECRETARY TO THE MALAYSIAN NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL (NSC). U.S. SIDE COMPRISED H.B. CUSHING, D/HA, SAM FELDMAN, INS/HONG KONG, THOMAS BARNES, REFUGEE COORDINATOR, BANGKOK, AND EMBASSY REFUGEE OFFICER AND POL SECTION CHIEF. MALIK DETAILED PROBLEMS FROM GOM PERSPECTIVE, CITING GROWING BACKLOG OVER NUMBER OF MONTHS WHEREBY FOR AVERAGE MONTHLY INTAKE OF 200, ONLY 70 REFUGEES WERE DEPARTING. AT PRESENT, THERE ARE 2906 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA. ALTHOUGH THIS IS NOT A FINANCIAL PROBLEM, STRAIN ON

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MANPOWER AT STATE GOVERNMENT LEVEL, PRIMARILY POLICE, IS SERIOUS. ANOTHER PROBLEM IS THAT OF SPACE; I.E., LIMITED FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES. IF THE CURRENT RATE OF INFLOW CONTINUES, THOUSANDS MORE WILL ARRIVE HERE IN THE NEXT YEAR, AMONG WHOM INCREASING NUMBERS APPEAR TO BE UNSKILLED, WITHOUT U.S. TIES, AND SEEMINGLY MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY MONETARY FACTORS.

3. CUSHING OUTLINED THE NEW U.S. PROGRAM, DESCRIBING HOW IT WILL GRADUALLY TAKE EFFECT OVER NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS AND PICK UP MOMENTUM SO THAT BY END OF 1977 WE HOPE TO HAVE MOVED ROUGHLY 1,000 QUALIFIED BOAT-CASE REFUGEES OUT OF MALAYSIA. THE GREATER THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY THE GOM IN COOPERATING WITH US AND FACILITATING ACCESS TO REFUGEES FOR VARIOUS STAGES OF SCREENING AND PROCESSING, THE FASTER WE CAN MOVE SUCH QUALIFIED REFUGEES TO THE U.S. FELDMAN CITED THE RELTIVE SIMPLI-CITY OF THE NEW PAROLE PROGRAM IN COMPARISON WITH THE CONDITIONAL ENTRY PROGRAM. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF READY ACCESS TO THE REFUGEES IN ORDER TO LIMIT TRAVEL TIME AND SPEED UP PROCESSING. FOR EXAMPLE, RELOCATING

REFUGEES TO PENINSULAR MALAYSIA FROM CAMPS IN SABAH AND SARAWAK WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD, HE COMMENTED. BARNES DESCRIBED STAFFING PROCEDURES FOR THE NEW PROGRAM AND KEY FEATURES, INCLUDING LACK OF TRANSIT CAMPS IN U.S. SUCH AS EXISTED IN 1975, AND CONSEQUENT NEED TO VERIFY SPONSORSHIP BEFORE REFUGEES COULD DEPART. HE NOTED THAT OF THE ESTIMATED 8,000 BOAT-CASE REFUGEES PRESENTLY IN THE REGION, THE U.S. WOULD ONLY BE TAKING 7,000 UNDER THIS PROGRAM. THE 1,000 SHORTFALL, PLUS NEW ARRIVALS WOULD, WE HOPED, BE TAKEN BY OTHER COUNTRIES AS PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT BEING COORDINATED BY THE UNHCR.

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4. MALIK EXPRESSED PLEASURE NEW PROGRAM IS BEING PUT INTO EFFECT NOW AND IS NOT REPEAT NOT MERELY STATEMENT OF INTENTION BY USG. HE POINTED TO PARTICULAR PROBLEM WITHIN MALAYSIA'S FEDERAL CONTEXT OF SEVERAL STATES BEARING INORDINATE BURDEN OF REFUGEE PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY JOHORE (OVER 1,000) AND TRENGGANU (ABOUT 1,000).

CUSHING REPLIED THAT WE ARE AWARE OF THIS, BUT HOPE THAT TO THE EXTENT POLITICALLY FEASIBLE REFUGEES CAN BE AGGREGATED FOR EASE OF ACCESS. THIS WILL NOT ONLY HELP US, BUT ALSO MAKE IT EASIER FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO PROCESS REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT, AS WELL AS BEING ADVANTAGEOUS FROM THE SECURITY STANDPOINT. (MALIK WAS OBSERVED  
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TAKING NOTES AT THIS POINT.)MALIK WAS TOLD THAT "AT LEAST AT THE OUTSET" CRITERIA ALONG LINES AS THAT USED IN THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM LAST YEAR WOULD BE USED.

5. CUSHING STRESSED THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT REPEAT NOT DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN "POLITICAL" REFUGEES AND THOSE PENALIZED ECONOMICALLY BY POLITICAL JUDGMENTS OF COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES. ONCE A PERSON FLEES, SUCH DISTINCTIONS ARE IRRELEVANT, AND WE TAKE STRONG EXCEPTION TO SUGGESTIONS THAT "ECONOMIC" REFUGEES BE REPATRIATED OR DENIED ASYLUM, CUSHING ADDED.

6. MALIK INQUIRED ABOUT THE NATURE OF U.S. POLICY FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF THE CURRENT PAROLE PROGRAM. CUSHING ASSURED HIM THAT SOME FORMULA FOR AN ON-GOING PROGRAM WOULD BE WORKED OUT, SINCE NO ONE EXPECTS THAT PROBLEM WILL BE RESOLVED BY OUR CURRENT INITIATIVE, ALTHOUGH WE EXPECT TO MAKE A SUBSTANTIAL DENT IN THE BACKLOG. MALIK ASKED WHETHER WE HAD ANY INDICATIONS THERE MIGHT BE INFILTRATORS PLANTED AMONG REFUGEES; CUSHING REPLIED THAT WE HAD NO REPEAT NO EVIDENCE OF SUCH.

7. ASKED ABOUT THE 1400 OR SO CAMBODIAN MUSLIMS THAT MALAYSIA HAD ACCEPTED, MALIK SAID THAT THEY HAD NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN FORMALLY RESETTLED AND WERE FREE TO GO ELSEWHERE WHENEVER THEY CHOOSE. DESPITE FAMILY TIES MANY OF THEM POSSESS, THEY ARE DIFFICULT TO ASSIMILATE, HE INDICATED. (SEE KL 6169 FOR REPORT ON RTG EFFORT TO PERSUADE ALAYSIA TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL CAMBODIANS.)

8. COMMENT: MALIK HAS PRINCIPAL AUTHORITY OVER REFUGEE MATTERS WITHIN THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT, AND HENCE THIS  
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WAS A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN HIS VIEWS AND TO BRIEF HIM ON DETAILS OF NEW U.S. PROGRAM. HE ALSO TOOK NOTE OF OUR INTEREST IN HAVING CAMPS CENTRALIZED TO

EXTENT FEASIBLE IN ORDER TO SIMPLIFY PROCESSING. MEETING ALSO AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO STATE U.S. POSITION ON THE SUBJECT OF "POLITICAL" VERSUS "ECONOMIC" REFUGEES AND TO REITERATE OUR HOPE THAT MALAYSIA WILL CONTINUE TO OFFER TEMPORARY ASYLUM. BASED ON THE NATURE OF HIS QUESTIONING, IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT CONTINUED MALAYSIAN RECEPTIVITY TO SUCH APPEALS WILL DEPEND ON ACTIONS OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS IN ACTUALLY REDUCING CURRENT REFUGEE BACKLOG HERE.

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## Message Attributes

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